

war, as Iraqi Shiite rebels took refuge in the remote communities of the Marsh Arabs, Saddam turned his army on this community. In the last 3 years, thousands of Marsh Arabs have disappeared, never to be heard from again, and entire villages have been burned to the ground. This time, the genocide was accompanied by an environmental outrage, as Iraqi engineers drained thousands of acres of marshlands in order to reach remote villages, wiping out a fragile ecosystem and obliterating the centuries-old way of life of the Marsh Arabs.

The Kurds, too, continue to suffer at Saddam's hand. They narrowly escaped a new round of massacres at the end of the gulf war in 1991, thanks to the intervention of the United States and our allies. Today, although the Kurds of Iraq govern the northern provinces autonomously under the protection of Operation Provide Comfort—a cooperative effort by the United States, Britain, and France—they remain subject to an internal blockade by Saddam's forces, as well as the U.N. embargo against all of Iraq, and periodic Iraqi attacks against Kurdish towns and individuals.

No Member of this body has done more to publicize and address the plight of the Kurds than the distinguished ranking member of the Foreign Relations Committee, Senator PELL. Thanks in large part to his efforts, and those of the distinguished Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, Senator HELMS, over 18 tons of Iraqi Government and secret police documents detailing Iraq's genocidal campaign against the Kurds—after being captured by Kurdish rebels in 1991—were brought to the United States for research and analysis. The result has been a well-documented history of Iraqi atrocities against the Kurds, including the horrific use of poison gas.

On this tragic anniversary, I want to commend Senator PELL and Senator HELMS for their leadership on this issue. I hope that the United States will continue to take a leadership role in working to ensure a better life for the Kurds of Iraq, both until and after Saddam Hussein is driven from power.

#### THE BAD DEBT BOXSCORE

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, on numerous occasions I have mentioned to friends that evening in 1972 when I first was elected to the Senate. When the television networks reported that I had won the Senate race in North Carolina, I was stunned. Then I made several commitments to myself, one of them being that I would never fail to see a young person, or a group of young people, who wanted to see me.

I have kept that commitment and it has proved enormously beneficial to me because I have been inspired by the estimated 60,000 young people with whom I have visited during the 23 years I have been in the Senate.

A large percentage of them have been concerned about the Federal debt

which recently exceeded \$5 trillion. Of course, Congress is responsible for creating this monstrous debt which coming generations will have to pay.

Mr. President, the young people and I almost always discuss the fact that under the U.S. Constitution, no President can spend a dime of Federal money that has not first been authorized and appropriated by both the House and Senate of the United States.

That is why I began making these daily reports to the Senate on February 25, 1992. I decided that it was important that a daily record be made of the precise size of the Federal debt which, at the close of business yesterday, Wednesday, March 13, stood at \$5,025,887,532,178.79. This amounts to \$19,076.70 for every man, woman and child in America on a per capita basis.

The increase in the national debt since my report yesterday—which identified the total Federal Debt as of close of business on Tuesday, March 12, 1996—shows an increase of nearly 9 billion dollars—\$8,603,940,268.76, to be exact. That 1-day increase is enough to match the money needed by approximately 1,275,792 students to pay their college tuitions for 4 years.

#### STATEMENT BY THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE FRIENDS OF IRELAND IN THE U.S. SENATE

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, The Friends of Ireland is a bipartisan group of Senators and Representatives opposed to violence and terrorism in Northern Ireland and dedicated to maintaining a United States policy that promotes a just, lasting, and peaceful settlement of the conflict. The latest developments for peace and the need for an immediate restoration of the IRA cease-fire make this year's St. Patrick's Day a particularly critical time in the peace process.

I believe all our colleagues will find this year's statement by the Senate Executive Committee of the Friends of Ireland of interest, and I ask unanimous consent that it be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

#### STATEMENT BY THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE FRIENDS OF IRELAND IN THE UNITED STATES SENATE, ST. PATRICK'S DAY, 1996

On this St. Patrick's Day, the Executive Committee of the Friends of Ireland in the United States Senate join the people of Ireland, North and South, in welcoming the latest developments for peace and in demanding an immediate restoration of the IRA cease-fire.

We welcome the Joint Communiqué issued on February 28 by Irish Taoiseach John Bruton and British Prime Minister John Major proposing steps to renew the peace process for Northern Ireland and pledging to begin all-party negotiations on June 10.

Friends of Ireland everywhere were outraged by the end of the IRA cease-fire last month and by the subsequent bombings in populated London which took the lives of three people and injured many others. Our hearts go out to the victims and the families

of those killed and injured in these terrorist attacks. We condemn unequivocally the IRA violence, and we call for an immediate restoration of the cease-fire. We commend the Loyalist paramilitaries for maintaining their cease-fire in spite of the IRA's resumption of violence.

We are greatly encouraged that the political leaders of Ireland and Great Britain have recommitted themselves to achieving a lasting peace. They clearly have a mandate from the vast majority of the people of Ireland—North and South, Protestant and Catholic alike—who recently turned out in large numbers to condemn the recent violence and demand a return to peace.

Many of the Friends of Ireland had the opportunity, during the recent visit to Northern Ireland by President Clinton, to see at first hand the determination of people of all traditions to seize the opportunity for peace. This was reaffirmed by the recent rallies in which people turned out in large numbers across Ireland to condemn the recent violence and demand a return to peace. As preparations are made for the commencement of all-party negotiations on June 10, there is an obligation on all parties to ensure that this widespread commitment to peace is turned into a reality for all the people of the island.

Friends of Ireland who accompanied the President on his trip also had the opportunity to observe the excellent work of the International Fund for Ireland, which continues to create jobs and promote understanding in both communities.

In 1994, at the strong urging of responsible leaders in Northern Ireland and Ireland, many of the Friends of Ireland wrote to President Clinton to suggest an encouraging gesture be made towards Gerry Adams, by giving him a limited visa to visit this country, in hopes that it might bring dialogue and an end to violence. John Hume later called the visa, "crucial" to achieving the subsequent cease-fire. We believe that the participation of Sinn Féin in all-party negotiations is vital for the success of the peace process, but Sinn Féin cannot take its place at the peace table without the restoration of the cease-fire.

In an effort to move beyond the pre-condition that weapons be handed over prior to all-party negotiations, an international commission led by former Senator George Mitchell was established by the British and Irish Governments to assess the issue and make recommendations to overcome the impasse. We commend Senator Mitchell and the other members of the commission for the outstanding job they have done. The commission found that turning in weapons in advance of talks would not occur and suggested constructive alternative ways forward.

When the Irish and British Governments launched the Mitchell Commission last November, they had agreed to "the firm aim" of achieving all-party negotiations by the end of February. Unfortunately, that target date was missed, due to the introduction of a new pre-condition by Prime Minister Major that elections must occur before talks can take place. The insistence by the British Government that elections precede all-party negotiations created unnecessary delays in the process and aroused concern in the Nationalist community of a return to the days when the Unionist majority imposed its will through the Stormont Parliament.

We are also disappointed by the lack of willingness, on the part of the leaders of the largest Unionist parties in Northern Ireland, to participate in good faith in the peace process, despite the fact that the process so clearly has the support of the people of their community. The Friends of Ireland urge the leadership of the Ulster Unionist Party and the Democratic Unionist Party to engage